



House Bill 752

State Board of Elections - Procurement Oversight

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Ways and Means Committee

Date: February 21, 2023

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 752. The bill makes timely and necessary updates to election laws to promote fairness, transparency, and accountability.

HB 752 requires the State Board of Elections (SBE) to take necessary and appropriate steps to provide transparency and accountability for contracts and procurement decisions, which will afford ample opportunity for input from local governments and Maryland voters.

An essential function of Maryland's county governments is to fund and oversee elections. Too often, the State makes unilateral decisions that oblige county funds – with zero local input. Counties, who run elections, should have input on major procurement contracts, as part of a true partnership with the State.

Under the bill, before issuing a request for proposals or an invitation for bids, the State Administrator or the Procurement Officer for the State Board must disclose the request for proposals or invitation for bids to the State Board. Further, before executing a procurement contract, the State Administrator or Procurement Officer must disclose the contract to the State Board. Finally, the State Board must vote to approve large procurement contracts before being submitted to the Board of Public Works for approval.

HB 752 provides necessary and timely policy changes that balance the shared goals of providing fair, open, and transparent elections. Accordingly, MACo requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 752.